



THE GARRETT GAZETTE

Congressman Garrett's Newsletter on Issues of Interest to New Jersey's 5th Congressional District

April, 2004

Dear Friend:

Thank you for signing up to receive my newsletter that includes updates on the work I am doing while representing the people of the 5th Congressional district. Your interest in and comments on the issues that Congress is debating are important to me as I weigh the merits of the legislation that comes before me. Thank you for your thoughts and interest in the legislative process. Please continue to contact myself or my staff to let your voice be heard. Please enjoy this edition.

Garrett In Action



[Rep. Garrett speaks to Andover High School Students during its' "Halt the Hurt, Heal the Humanity" anti-bullying campaign.](#)



[Rep. Garrett meets with friends from the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, Northern New Jersey chapter](#)

Highway & Transit Funding Bill Approved By U.S. House

On Friday, April 02, the House passed, with my support, H.R. 3550 The Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy For Users (TEA-LU). The bill provides federal funding for highway and transit projects over the next six years.

By passing TEA LU today we are taking a big step toward ensuring that our nation's infrastructure is maintained and improved. By our action today, we are going to save lives by improving the condition of our roads, we are going to provide millions of jobs, we are going to be sure that the trains and buses that carry people to work every day continue to run, and we are going to provide the very basic infrastructure that we need for our economy to prosper.

After working with the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I was able to secure needed funding to make the highways and mass transit more efficient and convenient for northern New Jersey commuters including:

- \$3,800,000 (Sussex) - Safety and Operational Improvements on Route 23 in Haryston and Franklin. Improvements in the vicinity of milepost 30.9 will include the addition of shoulders as well as improving the horizontal alignment by straightening the reverse curves.
- \$3,000,000 (Sussex) - Vernon Township, Route 94

House Passes Federal Budget that Makes Strong Commitment to Promote Strength for America, Growth for the Economy and Opportunity for the Future

On Thursday, March 25th the House passed a budget resolution for fiscal year 2005 that my colleagues and I on the House Committee on the Budget formulated. This is a fiscally responsible budget that balances priorities with realities.

We were given the tough task of putting together a federal budget while the federal government is running numerous deficits. We have a spending deficit because federal spending has increased so rapidly causing the government to spend more money than it takes in; a defense deficit resulting from complete neglect by the Clinton Administration to our men and women in the Armed Services and our Department of Defense; an intelligence deficit that was most tragically brought to the forefront on September 11, 2001; and a growth deficit that began either late 1999 or early 2000 when the economy began to significantly decline.

The single greatest priority, we in the committee had, was to keep America strong and safe. Our economy is only now beginning to improve and we are faced with substantial security costs both domestically and abroad. In the face of unprecedented threats to the nation's domestic and international security, the National Defense and

Improvements. Will improve safety, provide better circulation, reduce congestion, and accommodate better for pedestrians in the Mountain Creek vicinity. The mayor will follow with a quote shortly.

- \$2,700,000 Warren County NJ Route 57/County Route 519 Intersection Improvement. Historically this intersection has had a significant number of accidents - ranking either first or second in Warren County for total number of accidents annually, of which many are fatal.
- \$4,500,000 - BERGEN COUNTY Route 17 Improvements from William Avenue in Hasbrouck Heights to Garden State Parkway and Route 4 in Paramus. To mitigate congestion and improve roadway safety, this funding will improve traffic movement on Route 17.
- Also, the bill reauthorizes the entire Urban Core, parts of which are the Lackawanna Cutoff and Northern Line of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail.
- Over 6 years, NJ will receive over \$425,000,000 (in Highway funding) more from the House passed bill that it did from the last reauthorization.

Homeland Security budgets ensure the goals of winning the War on Terror, preparing for future challenges and protecting America's homeland are advanced.

This is a budget that while making tough choices, provides the means to ensure our top priorities at home and abroad. We took steps to root out waste, fraud and abuse and kept the final numbers at fiscally responsible levels so that no American family will incur tax increases.

The budget resolution is now in a conference committee with the Senate.

Fair and Equal Access for United States Military Recruiters

This week the House passed legislation, the ROTC and Military Recruiter Equal Access to Campus Act of 2004, H.R. 3966, which will ensure that Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) and U.S. military recruiters have fair and equal access for recruiting purposes on college campuses.

This bill will expand current law to include funds from the Departments of Energy, Transportation, and the CIA. H.R. 3966 also strengthens existing law by ensuring that schools accepting federal funding provide access to military recruiters that is "equal in quality and scope" to the access provided to other campus recruiters.

It is important and only fair that military recruiters are treated the same way as any other recruiter at a college or university. Successful recruitment of officers in our all-volunteer military depends heavily on the ROTC program. In 2003, for example, the ROTC produced 70% of the newly-commissioned officers who entered the U.S. Army.

At no other time since World War II has our nation's freedom relied more upon our military than as we engage in the global War on Terror. Passage of this bill should help ensure our Armed Services have equal access to our country's best and brightest, and further bolster our military's efforts to increase our national security.

Helping Families Get Back on Their Feet

For the sixth time since September 2002, the House today passed another short-term extension of the nation's welfare system, by approving the Welfare Reform Extension Act of 2004. This extension will permit more time for the U.S. Senate to act on a comprehensive reauthorization bill and subsequent conference deliberations on the reauthorization bill (H.R. 4) the House approved on February 13, 2003.

This extension will help the millions of families that rely on the welfare system during their tough times. I urge the Senate to pass legislation that, like the House, helps more welfare recipients achieve independence through work.

A final welfare reauthorization should include provisions that will protect children, strengthen families, and promote healthy marriages, including offering additional financial incentives for states and community-based organizations to pursue strategies to promote healthy marriages and improve child-well-being.

Facts of the Week

New job figures recently released and other economic indicators show that America's economy is strong and getting stronger, and that the jobs and growth plan passed by Congress is working.

- According to the payroll survey, 308,000 new jobs were created in March - the largest monthly increase since April 2000 -- and 759,000 jobs have been added over the last 7 months.
- The national unemployment rate was 5.7% in March - far below its peak of 6.3% in June 2003, and below the average of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s.
- Over the past year, the unemployment rate has fallen in 45 of the 50 states.
- The household survey shows an increase in employment of 978,000 since August 2003.
- West Virginia's unemployment rate in February was 5.4%, down from 6.4% a year earlier.

Keep your Calendars open

- On Monday April 19, I will be hosting a Homeland Security/ Federal Law Enforcement Roundtable with every Police Chief, Fire Chief and Emergency Management Coordinator in the 5th Congressional District, as well as the Mayor of every municipality. This event will take place at the Bergen County Law Enforcement Academy, 281 Campgaw Road, Mahwah, NJ 07430. Speakers include the United States Attorney, Christopher J. Christie, US Marshal, James Plousis and the Sheriffs of Bergen, Sussex, Passaic and Warren Counties. This event is open to the public.
- In the upcoming weeks I will host a reception for the military academy nominees and their families from the 5th Congressional District. One of the greatest honors a member of Congress has is nominating students for admission to the United States Military Academies. Hundreds of the brightest and best students in the 5th District compete for nominations and are selected by a highly competitive process.

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